

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 AMMAN 04366 241340Z

43

ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 IGA-02 MC-02 L-03 EB-07

OMB-01 TRSE-00 /035 W

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R 241152Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8868

INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

HQ USAF WASHDC

SECDEF WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

S E C R E T AMMAN 4366

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, JO, US, IR

SUBJECT: JORDANIAN REQUIREMENT FOR ADDITIONAL F-5B AIRCRAFT

REF: TEHRAN 8161

1. WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR LOOKING INTO THE FEASIBILITY OF OFFERING TO JORDAN THE EIGHT MAP F-5B AIRCRAFT THAT MAY BECOME AVAILABLE IN IRAN LATER THIS YEAR.

2. ROYAL JORDANIAN AIR FORCE (RJAF) CURRENTLY POSSESSES 57 F-5A/E AIRCRAFT, BUT ONLY 4 F-5B TRAINER AIRCRAFT. RJAF IS ATTEMPTING TO CONDUCT AN IN-COUNTRY PILOT TRAINING PROGRAM WITH THESE ASSETS, BUT THE LACK OF TRAINER AIRCRAFT HAS SEVERELY LIMITED PILOT TRAINING. BY DECEMBER 77, RJAF WILL GAIN AN ADDITIONAL 12 F-5E AIRCRAFT BUT ONLY 2 ADDITIONAL F-5B/F TRAINER AIRCRAFT. WE ESTIMATE BEST BALANCE WOULD BE PROVIDED BY A TOTAL OF 18 TRAINER AIRCRAFT IF PILOT TRAINING IS TO PROCEED AT A REASONABLE LEVEL.

3. PROBLEM IS OUR OWN AGONIZING OVER ADDING ANY NON-PROGRAMMED AIRCRAFT TO RJAF'S INVENTORY. WHAT WE WOULD PROPOSE TO GOJ IS THAT THEY FIND A CUSTOMER

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PAGE 02 AMMAN 04366 241340Z

FOR THEIR PRESENT F-104A/B FMS AIRCRAFT AND BEGIN

THE PHASE-OUT IN EARLY CY77. WE ARE CONVINCED
THAT FROM AN O AND STANDPOINT, AS WELL AS IMPROVED
MORALE AND REDUCED MANPOWER DEMANDS, THEY WOULD BE
IN FAR BETTER CONDITION TO PHASE OUT THE F-104'S.
WE WOULD EXPLAIN THAT JORDAN'S ABILITY TO COMPETE
WITH OTHER COUNTRIES FOR THESE AIRCRAFT WOULD BE
STRENGTHENED UNDER THESE CONDITIONS BECAUSE OF USG
COVNCERN OVER ADDITIONAL AND UNPROGRAMMED AIRCRAF.
HOWEVER, BEFORE WE EVEN MAKE THAT PITCH, WE NEED A
BETTER FEEL FOR THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE TRANSFER OF
F5AB'S TO JORDAN COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED.
PICKERING

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY AIRCRAFT, PILOT TRAINING, MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: SmithRJ
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976AMMAN04366
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760323-0146
From: AMMAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760827/aaaaawvd.tel
Line Count: 73
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION PM
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 TEHRAN 8161
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 JUN 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <12 OCT 2004 by SmithRJ>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JORDANIAN REQUIREMENT FOR ADDITIONAL F-5B AIRCRAFT
TAGS: MASS, JO, US, IR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006